Amendments to the Claims:

This listing of claims will replace all prior versions and listings of claims in the application:

Claims 1-111 (canceled).

Claim 112 (previously presented) A method for detecting seroconversion associated with NANBV infection at early times after infection comprising:

1. forming an aqueous immunoreaction admixture by admixing a body fluid sample with a NANBV capsid antigen;
2. maintaining said aqueous immunoreaction admixture for a time period sufficient for allowing antibodies against the NANBV capsid antigen present in the body fluid sample to immunoreact with said NANBV capsid antigen to form an immunoreaction product; and
3. detecting the presence of any of said immunoreaction product formed and thereby detecting early seroconversion.

Claim 113 (previously presented) The method of claim 112, wherein said detecting in step (c) comprises the steps of:

(iii) admixing said immunoreaction product formed in step (b) with a labeled specific binding agent to form a labeling admixture, said labeled specific binding agent comprising a specific binding agent and a label;

(iv) maintaining said labeling admixture for a period sufficient for any of said immunoreaction product present to bind with said labeled product; and

(v) detecting the presence of any said labeled product formed, and thereby the presence of said immunoreaction product.

Claim 114 (previously presented) The method of claim 113 wherein said specific binding agent is selected from the group consisting of Protein A, anti-human IgG and anti-human IgM.

Claim 115 (previously presented) The method of claim 113 or 114, wherein said label is selected from the group consisting of lanthanide chelate, biotin, enzyme and radioactive isotope.

Claim 116 (previously presented) The method of any one of claims 112 to 115, wherein said NANBV capsid antigen is affixed to a solid matrix.

Claim 117 (previously presented) The method of any one of claims 112 to 115, wherein said NANBV capsid antigen is comprised of a fusion protein.

Claim 118 (currently amended) The method of any one of claims 112 to 115, wherein said NANBV capsid antigen is selected from the group consisting of:

(a) a NANBV capsid antigen having the amino acid sequence from the residue 1 to 120 of ~~Figure 9~~ SEQ ID NO: 30;

(b) a NANBV capsid antigen having the amino acid sequence from the residue 1 to 20 CAP-A of ~~Figure 9~~ SEQ ID NO: 30;

(c) a NANBV capsid antigen having the amino acid sequence from the residue 21 to 40 CAP-B of ~~Figure 9~~ SEQ ID NO: 30;

(d) a NANBV capsid antigen having the amino acid sequence from the residue 1 to 74 CAP-N of ~~Figure 9~~ SEQ ID NO: 30;

(e) a NANBV capsid antigen having the amino acid sequence from the residue 69 to 120 of ~~Figure 9~~ SEQ ID NO: 30; and

(f) a NANBV capsid antigen having the amino acid sequence from the residue 2 to 40 of ~~Figure 9~~ SEQ ID NO: 30.

Claim 119 (currently amended) Kit to be used for diagnosing seroconversion associated with NANBV infection at early times after infection in a body fluid sample comprising an NANBV capsid antigen selected from the group consisting:

(a) a NANBV capsid antigen having the amino acid sequence from the residue 1 to 120 of ~~Figure 9~~ SEQ ID NO: 30;

(b) a NANBV capsid antigen having the amino acid sequence from the residue 1 to 20 CAP-A of ~~Figure 9~~ SEQ ID NO: 30;

(c) a NANBV capsid antigen having the amino acid sequence from the residue 21 to 40 CAP-B of ~~Figure 9~~ SEQ ID NO: 30;

(d) a NANBV capsid antigen having the amino acid sequence from the residue 1 to 74 CAP-N of ~~Figure 9~~ SEQ ID NO: 30;

(e) a NANBV capsid antigen having the amino acid sequence from the residue 69 to 120 of ~~Figure 9~~ SEQ ID NO: 30; and

(f) a NANBV capsid antigen having the amino acid sequence from the residue 2 to 40 of ~~Figure 9~~ SEQ ID NO: 30.

Claim 120 (previously presented) The kit of claim 119, further comprising a label or indicating means of signaling the formation of a complex containing an anti-NANBV antibody.

Claim 121 (previously presented) The kit of claim 119, wherein said NANBV capsid antigen is affixed to a solid matrix.

Claim 122 (previously presented) The kit of claim 119, wherein said specific binding agent is selected from the group consisting of Protein A, anti-human IgG and anti-human IgM.

Claim 123 (previously presented) The kit of claim 119, wherein said label is selected from the group consisting of lanthanide chelate, biotin, enzyme and radioactive isotope.

Amendments to the Drawings:

Please delete Figures 9, 10, 11A, 11B, 12A, 12B, 13A, 13B, 14, 15, 16, 17, 18 and 19, presented in the May 5, 2006 Amendment, in their entirety.